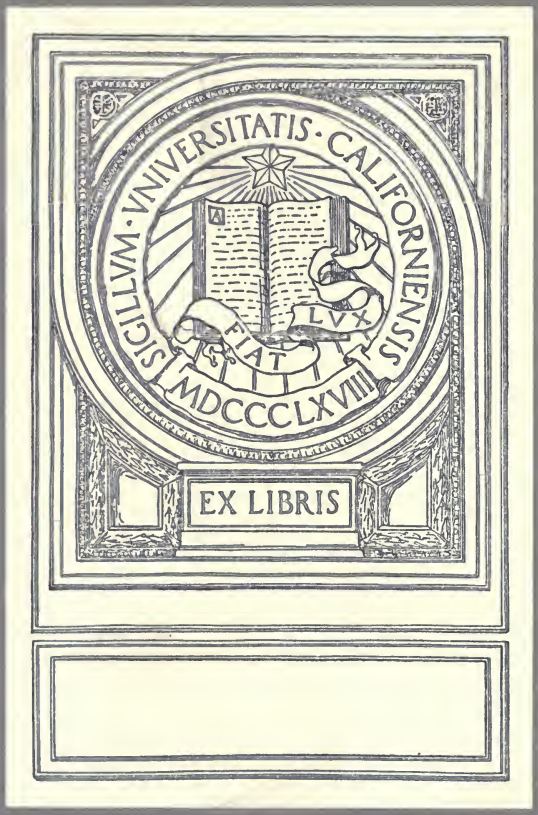
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"The Voice of Days."

A

COMMEMORATIVE DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED IN

CHRIST CHURCH, WATERTOWN, CONN.,

ON THE

Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity,

OCTOBER 28TH, 1855,

THE LAST OCCASION OF CELEBRATING DIVINE WORSHIP IN THE OLD CHURCH.

BY THE

Rev. HORACE H. REID, M. A.,

RECTOR.

E. B. COOKE AND COMPANY, PRINTERS,

WATERBURY, CONN.

1855.

NOTE.

This Discourse is sent to the press, not without hesitancy, at the request of some who desire to preserve a record of the event which it commemorates.

In its historical details, it makes no pretensions to anything beyond a mere sketch, made up of such scraps of information as could be gathered from the recollections of the older members of the church, brief parish records, the time-stained MSS. of the first Rector, and such printed authorities as came to hand.

It is submitted to his parishioners as an humble keepsake, to remind them of their obligations to their "spiritual ancestry," and of their title to the communion and fellowship of God's elect, by their

FRIEND AND PASTOR.

RECTORY, WATERTOWN,
All Saints' Day, 1855.

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COMMEMORATIVE DISCOURSE.

"I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom."—JOB xxxii., 7.

REVERENCE for antiquity is a primal attribute of our nature, and a wise reference to the past is the conservative element in human character. Whether in national or individual, social or religious life, this attribute, implanted in the soul of man by the GOD of Nature, exhibits itself in many and various forms. A mysterious awe attaches to what is venerable. Nations, therefore, are proud to refer their existence back to a remote and obscure origin. Hence it is often difficult to distinguish between fabulous and authentic history. The ancient heathen mythology derived its prestige more from the prevalence of this element than from any other circumstance; and it cannot be denied that the famous republics of Greece and Rome owe to it much of their renown. The like sentiment is discoverable in more enlightened times. It permeates all classes of men, and all phases of opinion. In matters of literary taste, for instance, there are works which have come down to us from antiquity, in regard to which the world has given its sentence of approval, and from whose verdict there is no appeal. A Homer, from his

dateless throne, looks down on all succeeding centuries; and a Virgil claims, and has received from mankind, a sort of literary apotheosis.

As with national, so with individual life. We reverence age; a peculiar degree of interest attaches to old associations, old scenes, old places. The home of our childhood has a charm about it which belongs to no other spot. Lapse of years rather increases than diminishes our veneration for it. We may wander forth into the wide world, and long be absent from the parental roof—perhaps, absorbed in schemes of pleasure, or the pursuits of ambition, scarcely even think of the objects we have left behind; but let us return to the familiar spot, and the simple sight of "the house, the garden, the tree, the rock, the brook, the hill, the meadow, where we played in childhood," will call up sweet and precious memories, and draw from the fount of feeling a gush of tributary tears. The truth is, the works of Nature interest us not more from their beauty and grandeur, than from their antiquity. Age itself is venerable. As "the Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork;" as "day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge,"—

> "Publishing to every land,
> The work of an Almighty hand,"—

so Nature, in her lengthened orbits, commands our veneration; and man himself is to be reverenced in his years. It is the depth of baseness to dishonor age. There is no sight so pitiable as a poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man. It is a vivid picture which the great dramatist draws, when he makes the frenzied

Lear, on the forlorn heath, in sublime apostrophe, reproach the raging elements for having, with his own ungrateful daughters, joined their

——— "high engendered battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as his,"

and well is it enjoined in one of the earliest written precepts of God's Word, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man."* Length of days, wherever and in whatever found, bespeaks a richness of quality, a ripeness of worth, a wealth of wisdom, which is more precious than rubies, and more to be esteemed than thousands of gold and silver. Thus, ordinarily, the hand of Time leaves upon whatever he touches a refined impress. Wine is not the only thing that improves by age. In relation to it, as in regard to friends, we may truly say, "The old is better."

The same feeling is exemplified in social life. There are customs handed down to us from the past which need nothing else to make them venerable. Such is the foundation of those laws which exist by prescriptive and immemorial usage. Not made the subject of formal enactment, the tacit sense of mankind gives them the force of direct statute. The institutions established by our ancestors, and bequeathed to us, their descendants, we feel under obligation to honor with strict observances. So it is with those celebrations which, originating with our sires, hallowed by recollections of the past, have been perpetuated in our own practice. As often as the anniversary of each returns, it brings vividly to

* Leviticus xix. 32.

view the virtues and deeds which it commemorates—moulding directly the public mind, and forming an important element of the public character; in their design and tendency, preserving the memory of our fathers, and by reference to what they have accomplished, stimulating us to an emulation of like glory and fame. Hence the propriety of the observance of the festivals and other holy days in the *Church's* calendar. Their high antiquity, as well as their commemorative character, renders them to us seasons of peculiar solemnity and joy.

There is, therefore, a sacred aspect in which reverence for the past exhibits itself. Our Holy Religion makes use of this sentiment in accomplishing the objects of her sublime and peaceful mission. Whatever comes down to us from a remote period, devoted to the service of piety, from the very circumstance of its origin, is invested with peculiar sacredness. It takes a powerful hold of the imagination, like objects seen in the twilight, magnified by distance above their relative proportions. With what feelings of awe and reverence does the Christian traveler gaze upon those famous works of art, in our fatherland, consecrated to purposes of Religion! How does his soul burn within him as he stands in contemplation of the old cathedral, moss-grown and ivy-mantled,

"With fretted arch and long-drawn aisle,"

and in "the organ's pealing notes," listens to melody which fell upon the ears, and attuned to harmony the hearts of those who were gathered there a hundred years ago! Perhaps his own ancestors once worshipped God in that very temple, and in the old

church-yard around, he sees the monuments erected over their sleeping dust. As he muses upon the past, and communes, as it were, with the dead, who shall describe the emotions which swell in his breast, and give unction to the life which he lives by the faith of the Son of God! True, our own land can boast no very ancient works of art devoted to religious uses. Comparing our sacred edifices with the numbers which exist on the Continent of Europe, whose age is marked by centuries, the term "old" can hardly be applied to them. Those which we have, of any considerable antiquity, are generally frail wooden structures; and these are fast giving way to the ravages of Time, or the necessity for better and enlarged accommodations. It is a sad reflection that we shall soon have no old churches among us. At the same time, it is a happy, redeeming circumstance, that these, in the main, are being superseded by more costly and substantial structures, which are likely to endure like those in the Old World, and to excite in our posterity such sensations as are created by no other objects or scenes. But though our old church buildings have not yet attained to a great multitude of years, yet are they not incapable of exciting in us emotions of this character. It may be presumed that they have been felt in some measure at this time, and on this occasion.

A new era has dawned upon our parish, and our thoughts, to-day, naturally take a retrospective turn. We have reached a stand-point in our history, at which we feel impelled to pause, and, surveying the past, to gather up the instructive lessons which it unfolds. More than sixty years have passed away

since the foundation of this House was laid. During all this time it has been used uninterruptedly for the sacred and solemn purposes for which it was originally set apart,—and, so far as appearances indicate, it might still be occupied for half a century to come. The sturdy timbers of its frame are apparently as solid and strong as they were on the day when men leveled in the forest the giant oak out of which they are hewn. But for causes other than that of mere age or decay—causes which greatly concern the interests of this parish, and speak well for its advancing prosperity—it has become necessary for us to vacate this staunch old House of Prayer. We have assembled and met together here to-day for the last time. We have come to bid the old church farewell—to take the last devout look at these consecrated walls—to engage for the last time in the solemn services of prayer and praise in this venerable and time-honored structure. In the substance of words spoken on a similar occasion, the old and the young, the fathers and the sons, the mothers and the daughters, the habitual attendant and the stranger are here to-day. But neither the one nor the other shall come here to worship again. The foot of no suppliant will hereafter step reverently over yon oft-trodden threshold. Before the bells of another Lord's Day shall be heard, these familiar surroundings, this humble altar, this simple pulpit, these plain pews, those old singing seats, from which the anthem and the song have so frequently been lifted to the throne on high, will have been torn from their places,—and this venerable building, this cradle of your Christian infancy, this nursery of your Christian childhood, this home of

your Christian maturity,—this representative of the true faith of Christ, this patriarch among the few remaining sanctuaries of olden times, will have been removed from its ancient site, in another generation to be forgotten.

Could these walls speak, they might tell many a tale of joy and sorrow in regard to events which have occurred within their sacred precincts. Is it not to be presumed, my brethren, that, in view of all the pleasant and mournful associations which bind you to this spot, you feel this to be an interesting occasion, and a solemn scene?

In the good Providence of God, we have at length been permitted to witness the completion of the great work which, for the last two years, has occupied and absorbed our attention. The new and more commodious House which has been erected, and which has been brought to its present state, in answer to our prayers, without danger or accident to any person engaged in the work, awaits consecration to the holy worship and service of the ever-blessed Trinity.

The circumstances, therefore, under which we have assembled, seem to render this a fitting time for a *review* of all the way in which, as a church and people, we have been guarded and blessed,—that, giving heed to the voice of days, we may learn lessons of true wisdom—may have a just sense of the goodness of God toward us, and manifest our appreciation of His mercies by those expressions and acts of gratitude which they naturally inspire.

In recounting the history of the parish, while, of necessity, I must recite some particulars which are

already known, I shall endeavor to accomplish my task with as much brevity and conciseness as the subject will admit.

You have heard—as what churchman has not?—of the venerable "Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts,"—the great missionary agency of the Church of England, to which our own church is "indebted, under God, for her first foundation, and a long continuance of nursing care and protection." That Society was organized a century and a half ago, and now there is scarcely a quarter of the globe to which its operations have not been extended, and thousands and tens of thousands of our race have seen great cause to bless God for its foundation. Its first efforts were confined, in a great measure, to the New England colonies. The directors sent out clergymen and schoolmasters, distributed books, and used every lawful means for the accomplishment of their pious work. But they were met here, in every step of their progress, by the most determined opposition. Wherever the missionaries came, we are credibly informed that "the ministers and magistrates of the Independents were remarkably industrious, going from house to house, persuading the people from hearing them, and threatening those who should attend with imprisonment and punishment." It could hardly, therefore, be expected that, under the shadow of the intolerant spirit which pervaded the Puritan character in those days, and in so uncongenial a soil, this vine of the Church's planting should have taken root and flourished. Yet the good seed was not sown in vain, as the progress of the Church in our own Diocese abundantly proves. Here, as the

Bishop of Oxford remarks, in his history of the American Church,* is plainly seen the finger of God. "In Connecticut the Church's roots took a deeper hold in the soil, from the action of the storms amongst which she had grown up. In no part of America was her communion so pure and apostolical as here. Her clergy were, for the most part, *natives*—men of earnest piety, of settled character, and well established in Church principles. And so greatly did she flourish, that, at the outbreak of the troubles which ended in the separation of the colonies and the mother country, there was every reason for believing that another term of twenty years' prosperity such as she had last enjoyed would have brought full half the population of the State within her bosom." Whatever the causes which may have operated to prevent this happy result, it is now, at least, our privilege to count within our borders upward of a hundred clergymen, nearly as many parishes which are self-supporting, with ten thousand communicants, and probably a much larger number whose attachment to our sublime Ritual is all but such as to lead them to appropriate to themselves the blessings of a fuller and closer union with a crucified Redeemer, in the sacrament of the altar.

At what date the services of the Church were introduced into this town is not precisely certain. Tradition states that the first time the Prayer Book was publicly used, and a clergyman seen here, was something more than a century ago, on occasion of the marriage of a daughter of one Captain Brown, a loyal churchman,†

* *The Church in America.* London edition, p. 126.

† Sometimes called, in derision, *Bishop* Brown.

residing on what is now known as "the Buckingham Place," at which the distinguished Dr. Samuel Johnson, of Stratford, officiated, and when he also read Evening Prayer, and preached, the services being held in a barn, the frame of which, or at least part of it, is still standing. Whether the facts be exactly so or not, it is known that Dr. Johnson, from the time of his settlement in Stratford, in 1723, extended his visits to the neighboring towns, and gave occasional services. It is quite probable that he officiated at Waterbury; and it is certain that, as early as the year 1737, the Rev. Mr. Arnold, an itinerant missionary, officiated regularly in his itineracy at Waterbury, within the limits of which place this village was then included. Previous to 1736, it does not appear that any separate civil or ecclesiastical society existed here. It is on record, that at this date a petition was addressed to the town of Waterbury, by several persons resident here, "asking permission to hire preaching amongst themselves, during the four most inclement months of the year, and also asking exemption from ministerial taxes in Waterbury during said time."* This petition was not granted. Subsequently, however, a petition was sent to the General Assembly which met with favor, and a society was organized by the name of Westbury. In the same year (1739) the neighboring town of Plymouth was organized into a society of the town of Waterbury, under the name of Northbury. Here it is known that the Rev. Mr. Morris and the Rev. James Lyon successively labored; and it is probable that this place was also favored with services

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* *Vide* Historical Sketch of Watertown, by the Rev. N. S. Richardson, A. M.

by them, in connection with their regular duties at Waterbury, Derby and West Haven, the mission to which they had been appointed by the venerable Society, until the return of the former to England, and the transfer of the latter to Long Island. These stations for several years thereafter enjoyed no more than occasional services. But in 1749, the Rev. Mr. Mansfield returned from England in holy orders, and by direction of the Society, gave his attention to the spiritual interests of the mission, laboring unremittingly until his death, which did not occur until he had attained his ninety-seventh year. I cannot ascertain to what extent this worthy man officiated here; but unquestionably, owing to his exertions, the Church in this region greatly lengthened her cords and strengthened her stakes. By his piety and zeal, great good was accomplished, and to this day "his praise is in all the churches."

In 1759, the Rev. James Scovill, born in Waterbury, and ordained, of course, in England, (for not until 1784 was there a Bishop on this continent,) succeeded to the charge of a part of the mission which Dr. Mansfield had relinquished, devoting one half of his time to Waterbury and Westbury, and the other half to Northbury and New Cambridge, (now Bristol.) Thus matters stood until 1764, when, owing to the abundant labors of the Rev. Mr. Scovill, the number of churchmen in Westbury had so greatly increased as to justify the formation of a separate parish, and the erection of a church edifice. Several individuals* took an active part in this move-

* Their names are as follows:—Asahel Beach, Seth Blake, Daniel Brown, Joseph Brown, Samuel Brown, James Doolittle, Thomas Doolittle, Jonathan Fulford, Jonathan Garnsey, Asa Judd, John Judd, Noah Judd, John Hickox, Joseph Hickox, Joseph Pritchard, Eleazar Prindle, Gershom Scott, Edward Scovill, Samuel Scovill, William Scovill.

ment, and entered into an agreement "to hold public worship in Westbury on those Sundays when there was no preaching in Waterbury," and also to make arrangements to build a church.

These persons, with their families, accordingly met together for the celebration of divine worship at private residences throughout the summer, and during the succeeding winter and summer. Meanwhile, preparations were made for the erection of a church, 37 by 45 feet, upon a piece of ground near what is now known as the old grave-yard, which had been donated for the purpose by Captain George Nichols, of Waterbury.

In the month of October, 1765, the House being in a sufficient state of forwardness, (it was never fully completed,) they assembled in it for the first time to worship HIM who had put it into their hearts, and given them the means to build a temple to the glory and praise of His holy name. Though it was impossible to have it duly consecrated, services were held appropriate to the occasion, and a dedicatory discourse was delivered by the Rev. Samuel Andrews, missionary at Wallingford, Cheshire and North Haven. The name adopted was "Christ Church." The parish of Waterbury being petitioned for the services of the Rev. Mr. Scovill, they were obtained on every sixth Sunday. This arrangement continued until 1771, when the increasing wants of the parish demanding a larger share of attention, the parishes in Northbury and Cambridge agreed to relinquish the services of Mr. Scovill, who thenceforward confined his labors to Waterbury and Westbury.

In the year 1773, the interior of the church underwent some additions and improvements. But the war

of the Revolution commencing soon after, the parish suffered a considerable diminution in strength and numbers, and no small degree of persecution. The Majesty of Heaven was insulted by the indignities offered to the church. The windows of the sacred edifice were demolished, and many of the prominent members were so far intimidated as to be debarred the privilege of public worship. Those were indeed "troublous times" for our Zion. But, by the favoring protection of the Most High, she was not allowed to become extinct. It was the boast of her enemies, that if the colonies should succeed in throwing off the British yoke, there would not be a church in New England—a prediction which the result has nobly falsified.

In 1779, the parish, by the will of Mr. Edward Scovill, came into possession of a tract of land, consisting of about seventeen acres, situated near the church. This was subsequently sold, and became the nucleus of the fund at present controlled by the Trustees.*

In 1780, Westbury, which up to this date had remained a society of Waterbury, was incorporated as an independent town, by the name of Watertown. The colonies having become free from foreign control, it was deemed inconsistent with the charter of the Society for Propagating the Gospel, any longer to continue the customary support to missionaries here. The Rev. Mr. Scovill removed to the province of New

* The property of the parish now consists of about $4000, in secured notes, besides the three acres of land in the centre of the village, on which the new church, rectory, and school-house now stand.

Brunswick, and the church in Watertown remained without the ministrations of a settled pastor until the month of February, 1788, when the parish united with that of Plymouth, and made a permanent engagement with the Rev. Chauncey Prindle,* (a nephew of the Rev. Mr. Scovill,) then in deacon's orders, and who had officiated, more or less, as lay-reader in the church, at a salary of thirty pounds.† On the 24th of the month, Mr. Prindle was ordained Priest by Bishop Seabury, in New London, and immediately entered upon the discharge of his duties—residing in Watertown.

The growth of the parish was now rapid,—so much so, that in 1792 it was determined to erect a new church,‡ upon what was termed by Mr. Prindle "a more eligible spot, and a more elegant plan;" but which, as it now stands confronting the chaste and beautiful structure which your liberality has reared, is truly "in comparison of it as nothing." Forty-six names were appended to the subscription paper, which is still in a good state of preservation.

The frame of the edifice in which we are now

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* Rev. Chauncey Prindle, M. A., of Yale College, was born at Westbury, now Watertown, in 1753, and was graduated at Yale, 1776. He was ordained Deacon, June 1st, 1787, and Priest, February 24th, 1788. From the time of his ordination until 1804, he preached a part of the time in Watertown, and the remainder in Northbury, now Plymouth, until 1806. After this he was Rector of the churches in Oxford and Salem (Naugatuck) for several years. He died in 1833, aged 80 years.—*Biographical Sketches of the Clergy*, by the Rev. A. B. Chapin, D. D.

† "To be paid in beef, pork, butter, tallow, wool, flax, or any sort of grain."—*Clerk's book, under date of February 4th*, 1788.

‡ It was at first proposed to *move* the old church to a more desirable location, and a committee was appointed to consider and report upon the expediency of the measure.

assembled was raised in the month of August, 1793, upward of 62 years ago,—and on the 18th of November, 1794, it was consecrated by the first Bishop of the Diocese, the revered Seabury, as "Christ Church."

The parish continued to prosper in spiritual and temporal things under the labors of its indefatigable and worthy Rector,* until, in 1804, the Rev. Mr. Prindle resigned his charge, preaching his farewell discourse on the 23d of December of that year, from the text in the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, "A faithful friend is the medicine of life, and they that fear the Lord, shall find Him." He reported, at the close of his incumbency, 30 families as having joined the church while he held the rectorship, 381 children and adults baptised, 86 couples married, and 66 burials.

In the autumn following Mr. Prindle's resignation, an invitation to the rectorship was extended to the Rev. Russell Wheeler,† who remained in charge of the parish until the year 1814.

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* The following anecdote is illustrative of Mr. Prindle's zeal and perseverance in overcoming difficulties which would have appalled a different man:

"In the month of August, 1795, he was invited to preach a lecture in Waterbury, on the other side of the Naugatuck river, and baptise several children, belonging to families that were about to remove to the *Western wilderness*—(the neighborhood of the present city of Utica, N. Y.) He was expecting to cross the river from the Watertown side in a canoe ordinarily kept at the place, or to ford the stream with his horse. But the day previous a copious rain had fallen, and the river was so high that it could not be forded: the canoe had disappeared, and no alternative was left but to go around by the bridge above, or to swim the river. The first would make him too late for his appointment, so he plunged in, and swam the swollen stream, and was ready at the hour to meet the people, and perform his duty."—*MSS.*

† The Rev. Russell Wheeler graduated at Williamstown in 1803, was ordained Deacon in 1805, and Priest in 1807, by Bishop Jarvis. He was Rector of Christ Church, Watertown, from 1805 to 1814. After resigning this parish, he removed to Otsego County, in the State of New York, where he continues his labors to the present day.—*Sketches.*

Owing to the absence of any record of ministerial acts during the period of the Rev. Mr. Wheeler's incumbency, I am unable to give such statistical information on these heads as I could wish. It is in his recollection, however, that he left about 75 families connected with the parish, and as many communicants.

While he was here, about a thousand dollars were raised by subscription, and applied to the purchase of a house for his use. This house was subsequently sold, and the proceeds added to the avails of the glebe before referred to.

Mr. Wheeler was succeeded by the Rev. Frederick Holcomb,* in the fall of the year just named, whose services, until the year 1831, the parish was able to engage for only three-fifths of the time, the remainder being devoted to Northfield. In that year his connection with Northfield ceased, and he thenceforward devoted his whole time to this parish, until his resignation in 1838. During the earlier period of his ministry, an effort was made to increase the fund by subscription. The sum of $3780.00 thus obtained, helped to swell the original amount. At a later date, the sum of $1500, secured in a similar manner, was expended in the enlargement and repair of the sacred edifice.

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* Rev. F. Holcomb, D.D., of Trinity, 1838, was born at Granby, October 13th, 1786, and graduated at Williams College, 1809. He was called to the rectorship of Christ Church, Watertown, in 1814, and resigned it in 1838, having performed the duties of the office faithfully, acceptably and successfully for a period of twenty-four years. Since then, he has been Rector of some of the neighboring parishes, most of the time. He is still living, and active in his Master's service. Dr. H. was for many years a member of the Standing Committee of the Diocese, and has also represented it in General Convention.—*Ed. Cal.*

The parochial register for this period has not been preserved. But for the last ten years of Dr. Holcomb's ministry, the record stands thus,—baptisms, 115; confirmations, 70; communicants, 85; marriages, 66; burials, 103.

In November, 1838, the Rev. N. S. Richardson* was called to the rectorship. He had served the parish as an assistant minister during his Diaconate, and was here ordained to the Priesthood. Under his vigorous administration, a new impulse was given to the affairs of the parish. Various improvements in the appointments of the interior of the church were projected and carried out, numerous accessions were made of converts to the faith of Christ, and the people were thoroughly instructed in the doctrines, discipline and worship of His church. The Rev. Mr. Richardson resigned the rectorship in the summer of 1845. The register shows at the close of the seven years of his incumbency, that there were—baptisms, 100; confirmations, 56; communicants added anew, 74—by removal, 24; marriages, 42; burials, 84.

Upon his resignation, a temporary arrangement was entered into with the Rev. Dr. Holcomb (who was, and still is resident in the parish) for a supply of services, which continued for the space of four years, when, owing to advanced age and increasing infirmities, he finally withdrew. During this time a further subscription of $1500 was secured, and devoted to the erection of a building for the purposes of a

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* Now Editor of *The Church Review*, and resident in New Haven.

school, for instruction in the higher branches of learning.*

Upon the retirement of the Rev. Dr. Holcomb, the present Rector, at your call, became your minister, and entered upon the duties of the office at the Easter season of 1850. During my rectorship of five and a half years, 91 infants and adults have received baptism, and 48 persons have been confirmed by the Bishop: 37 marriages and 78 burials have been solemnized. Ninety-seven communicants have been added to the church, while a number equal to half this aggregate has been lost by death, and removal from the parish. The present number is 165.

The offerings for the same period, have been as follows: Communion alms, $312 34; missionary and charitable contributions, including legacies of two deceased communicants, $1,504 90. To these add subscriptions for the erection of the church, and various parochial purposes, and it appears that nearly $18,000 is the sum total of offerings for five years past, exclusive of the current expenses of the parish. It is gratifying to be able to state that this amount has been entirely raised within the limits of the parish, with the exception of one or two moderate subscriptions toward the new church, by parties formerly resident in the place; and that, after the subscribed sums, at present due, are paid, no incum-

* The Academy, as it is termed, has been, for several years, in successful operation. If the parish could count with its glebe, fund, new church, rectory and school-house, a *parochial school* proper, it would be furnished with all the appliances belonging to the best endowed parishes in the country.

brance will remain upon any part of the church property.

The history of *events* which have transpired during this period is so familiar to you, as hardly to require recital. The removal of the Academy to a more favorable location,—the erection of the parsonage,—the enlargement of the church green—objects accomplished by your zeal and munificence—are of sufficient importance to be noted and remembered. But they are insignificant works compared with that greater one which it is now our happiness to see brought so nearly to completion.

In our hitherto straitened condition, as the necessity for enlarged accommodations became apparent, the question of the expediency of attempting the erection of a new church edifice began to be discussed. It was finally, with great unanimity, determined in the affirmative. If there were some few who shrank at the magnitude of the undertaking, the great majority "had a mind to work," and that which we may hope was "the *corner-stone* of our prosperity," was laid, with appropriate solemnities, by the Assistant Bishop of the Diocese, on the 29th of May, 1854. We contemplated, indeed, at the outset, no such structure as that which our eyes are now permitted to behold. Our aim, at most, was the completion of a plain and substantial edifice, which should answer the purpose of accommodating all who wished to attend the sanctuary. But as the wants and wishes of those most concerned began to be consulted, and the great propriety was felt of erecting a House which should be "in keeping with that Religion from which the architect derives his

inspiration," and with the majesty of its Divine author, it was deemed advisable to incur a greater outlay. And who is not satisfied with the result? Who regrets the having given, for the accomplishment of this object, a dollar too much? Who shall say that we are about to offer to the Most High too costly a gift? "All things come of thee, O LORD, and of thine own do we give thee." True, the past has been a year of unusual pecuniary embarrassment, and we have encountered other and serious discouragements and difficulties; but we speak not now of these. Let us thank GOD that they are over,—that we are enabled to enjoy for ourselves, and to transmit to our posterity, so noble a monument to His glory and praise. And let us see to it, that, in separating this temple of the living GOD from all unhallowed, worldly and common uses, to be forever devoted to His holy worship and service, "the effect be to fill our minds with an awful apprehension of His divine majesty, and a deep sense of our own unworthiness; that so approaching His sanctuary with lowliness and devotion, and coming before Him with clean thoughts and pure hearts, with bodies undefiled, and minds sanctified, we may always perform a service acceptable in His sight." If this be not the result, we shall have labored in vain, and spent our strength for naught. Nay, we shall have added unto all our sins this evil,—to have multiplied our advantages, to have increased our privileges, only to make our condemnation greater in the judgment of the last day.

Reverting now, in conclusion, to the peculiar circumstances under which we are assembled, I cannot forbear indulging in some reminiscences suggested by

the occasion. Our joyous anticipations of the future may well be tempered by the stern realities of this scene. "Passing away" is written in indelible characters upon all the monuments of human enterprise and skill. I seem to see the truthful words engraven upon these walls. I go back, in thought, to the time when the foundations of this House were laid, and when these beams and rafters were reared. The scene with which we have been conversant of late is reproduced in my sight. Pastor and people engage with cheerfulness and alacrity in the good work. The building is begun, continued and completed. A throng of devout worshippers is assembled to participate in the ceremony of sacredly dedicating it to the service of the triune Jehovah. The venerable servant of the Most High proceeds with the impressive form of consecration,—now "kneeling on his knees," in fervent supplication for Divine acceptance,—now strengthening and encouraging the hearts of this portion of the fold of Christ by words of counsel and congratulation,—now breaking to them the bread of life, and now invoking upon them that peace of God which passeth all understanding, and that grace and heavenly benediction which remind all that this is none other than the House of God, and the gate of Heaven. Months and years have sped since the solemn service of that day, and now how different a scene do we witness! This old temple still stands, but where are those who engaged in the worship of that occasion? The men and women of the olden time have passed away. The young have become old. Indeed, I see before me but two or three whose recollections extend back to that time. One only had then reached

the age of early manhood.* And he stands among us now, a very patriarch, coming down from a former generation, and supplying the single link in the chain which binds the past to the present. . . . . Such is the story of life. Change and decay, making

> "This earth and ocean all
> But one vast tomb of man,"

leave their impress upon all created things, and continually evince the truth of the inspired declaration, "the fashion of this world passeth away." Truly "I have said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom." The past hath a voice. The living know that they shall die. One fate awaits all, and for all there is one issue—eternal happiness, or everlasting misery. It is the great business of life to prepare for death. Days and years teach us lessons of heavenly wisdom. May God enable us to take them home to our hearts. May we strive to do with our might whatsoever our hands find to do, since there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither we are going. May we be truly thankful for our privileges, and make a due improvement of them. And when our services in temples made with hands are ended, may we be found worthy of a part in the worship of that more glorious temple whose builder and maker is God.

And now, it only remains for us to bid this old House of Prayer farewell. In view of all the tender associations connected with it, it is no matter of surprise that we are loath to give it up. For here brethren and

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* Mr. Benjamin Judd.

sisters have been wont to meet to offer up prayer and praise, and to worship God in the beauty of holiness. Here the words of eternal life have refreshed and comforted the soul. Here the baptismal waters have flowed, and here have been uttered those plighted vows which bind two loving hearts in one. Before this altar we have often knelt to receive the consecrated symbols of a Saviour's body and blood, and here we have brought our dead, to pay to the loved and the lost the last sad offices of respect, and to learn from them, in their examples, how to live, and how to die.

Dismantle thee, then, old church, as they may,—strip thee of thy adornments,—let ruin and desolation mark this consecrated spot, and thy name in the next generation be clean put out,—yet never can we forget thy gray old spire, thy sacred aisles, thy venerated courts. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

"Farewell, dear temple of the Lord,
For thee my tears shall flow;
I grieve to speak the parting word,—
With ling'ring steps I go.

What though anear this sacred spot,
A statelier pile I see,—
Dear House of God, when thou art not,
Shall memory turn to thee."

APPENDIX.

CLERGYMEN IN CHARGE OF CHRIST CHURCH, WATERTOWN, AND TERMS OF SERVICE.

NAMES.	TIME.
The Rev. JAMES SCOVILL, ...	1759–1785.
The Rev. CHAUNCEY PRINDLE, . . .	1788–1805.
The Rev. RUSSELL WHEELER, ...	1805–1814.
The Rev. FREDERICK HOLCOMB, . . .	1814–1838.
The Rev. NATHANIEL S. RICHARDSON,	1838–1845.
The Rev. HORACE HALL REID, ...	1850.

☞ It is noteworthy that the parish, during the century of its existence, has been served by so few clergymen, and that, of those who have had charge of it for the last fifty years, all are now living.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW CHURCH.

The edifice is a beautiful specimen of the early English style of architecture. It consists of nave and aisles, 80 by 56 feet, with buttressed tower on the northwest corner, of three stages, surmounted by an octagonal belfry, and terminated by a spire—the whole rising to an elevation of 150 feet. The building stands so that orientation is preserved. The site is favorable, being the highest ground in the centre of the village, which renders the church a conspicuous object at a distance of several miles.

The exterior presents a wheel window, in the west end of the nave, twelve feet in diameter, with pointed and other lights, and a double-arched doorway, as also an entrance to the vestibule in both the tower and south aisle. There are no buttresses except at the angles of the building. The aisle windows, consisting of six on each side, are divided by single mullions.

The entire surface of the interior is finished in plaster, warmly tinted, with groined ceiling, and heavy mouldings, springing from foliaged corbels. The side walls of the nave are supported by clustered piers, in wood, with elaborately wrought capitals. The clerestory windows, over the bays, are triplets. The reading-desk, and pulpit, which is of an octangular shape, occupy opposite sides of the chancel arch. Between them stands the font,* an excellent specimen of workmanship in white marble, having an octagonal shaft and bowl, and bearing on its face, in panel work, the sacred monogram. The chancel is properly separated by step and rail, and is decorated with panelled screen, grained and gilded. It is furnished with altar,† Bishop's chairs,‡ and sedilia, of black walnut, which is the material

* The gift of George R. Chittenden, Esq,, of London, England.

† The communion damask, which is of the richest pattern, was procured by means of the self-denying labors of the little children's Sewing Circle.

‡ Memorials of a deceased communicant, Mrs. S. Scovill.

of which the reading-desk, pulpit, gallery front, and pew cappings are composed. On either side of the chancel are the vestry and library rooms. The slips,* over 100 in number, are uniformly cushioned throughout, and will furnish sittings for upward of 500 persons. The floor is covered with carpeting of an appropriate pattern, the alleys and vestibule being spread with a thick and substantial species of matting. Heat is obtained from furnaces, and the church is lighted by lamps of unique form and finish, the cost of which was sustained by the ladies of the parish. A new and clear-toned bell, of nearly 1200 lbs. weight, mainly the gift of AUGUSTUS CLEVELAND, Esq., of New York, has been received, and hung in the tower.† The organ loft occupies the whole of the west end of the nave, and is provided with a large and remarkably fine instrument, from the manufactory of the Messrs. HOOK, of Boston. A tablet of Italian marble adorns the east end of the north aisle, bearing the following inscription:—

COMMEMORATIVE

OF THE FAITHFUL LABORS IN THIS PARISH

OF

The Rev. James Scovill,

AND

The Rev. Chauncey Prindle.

A.D. 1759—1804.

THEIR RECORD IS ON HIGH.

All the windows in the church are of enamelled glass, in metallic sash. The side and front lights have plain enamelled quarries, of a mild tint, with ornamental borders, and head of foliage.

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* It is designed to reserve a large proportion of these, to be forever *free*.

† The old bell has been purchased, and presented to the church at Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. "For half a century, it here called the members of Christ's flock to the house of prayer and praise; and now it has been sent to echo the same call to the scattered sheep of the West, from the tower of one of the *free* churches which has grown up under the fostering care of the Nashotah Mission. May the love of Christ lead many more to follow such a good example."—*Church Journal.*

The chancel window was designed by Mr. RENWICK, of New York, and is greatly admired. It is twenty feet in height, and has five compartments, the central representing, in something less than life size, our Divine LORD, standing under a canopy, and bearing in the left hand a globe surmounted by a cross, the whole being most richly and elaborately executed. Below the pedestal is the legend, "We praise thee, O GOD; we acknowledge thee to be the LORD." The side spaces are filled with rich diaper work, with occasional medallions, such as the evangelistic symbols, the cross, the *Agnus Dei*, the dove, the pelican in her piety, the wheat, the grape, the crown of thorns, etc. The glass work was, in part, executed by Wm. GIBSON, of New York; and the original drawings of the church were made by J. WOOD JOHNS, Architect, of the same city.

A spacious room in the basement story, fifty feet square, designed for Sunday School and lecture purposes, yet remains to be fitted up for occupancy.

THE CONSECRATION.

This interesting and imposing ceremony took place on Thursday, November 15th. The weather was delightful, and the church was crowded. At half-past ten o'clock, the procession, consisting of the Bishop (WILLIAMS) and clergy,* in surplices, was received at the entrance of the church by the Wardens and Vestrymen of the parish, and proceeded toward the chancel, uttering responsively the 24th Psalm. The Instrument of donation and Request to consecrate was read by the Rector, and the Sentence of Consecration by the Rev. Mr. Willey. After Morning Prayer by the Rev. Drs. Beardsley, Coit and Clark, the Bishop proceeded with the ante-communion service, assisted in the Epistle by the Rev. Dr. Hallam, and preached

* Beside the Bishop and Rector, the following named clergymen were in attendance:—The Rev. Drs. Beardsley, Clark, Coit, Hallam and Holcomb; and the Rev. Messrs. Acly, Brown, Capron, Covell, Davis, Fitch, Gray, Harriman, Horton, Jones, Littlejohn, Miller, Preston, Richardson, J. Scott, J. L. Scott, Tuttle, Vibbert, Willey, Williams, Yarrington and Zell.

the sermon from St. James, v. 13. The office for the Holy Communion followed, conducted by the Bishop, who consecrated the elements, and administered to the clergy, assisted by the Rev. Dr. Holcomb,—the Rector and the Rev. Mr. Richardson administering to the laity. The post-communion service by the Bishop closed the exercises of the morning.

At half-past two o'clock, a large congregation was again assembled, and after Evening Prayer, a sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Hallam, from Isaiah lix. 5. A night service was also held, when the Rev. Mr. Littlejohn preached from 1 Peter, ii. 7.

The entire services, of which the foregoing is a meagre sketch, were of the most deeply interesting and impressive character—as all bore testimony whose privilege it was to be present.

The music was exceedingly appropriate, and admirably performed. The Choir was strengthened by the presence of persons of superior musical attainments, and Mr. Bucknall, of St. Paul's Church, New Haven, who kindly presided at the organ, by his surpassing taste and skill, added not a little to the effect of the solemnities.

Thus has passed a day long to be remembered, and full of promise for the future to this favored parish. May God of His infinite condescension accept the offering which we have made to Him, and when our work below is finished, and we are called from the enjoyments of His earthly courts, may it be our portion to meet and join in the worship of that glorious "House not made with hands eternal in the Heavens."

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